

Whereas the faculty in the Department of Agronomy also have made significant international contributions to world food production and natural resources sustainability, including participation and leadership in long-term projects in India, the Philippines, Nigeria, Morocco, and Botswana;

Whereas the faculty in the Department of Agronomy have distinguished themselves by receiving numerous university and national awards in teaching, research, and extension and provided service and leadership for national and international professional societies;

Whereas the faculty in the Department of Agronomy have conducted research for sustainable, efficient crop and range production systems that conserve natural resources and protect environmental quality;

Whereas, today, a majority of the acres of wheat and a significant number of acres of alfalfa, soybean, and canola in Kansas are planted with varieties developed in the Department of Agronomy;

Whereas the Department of Agronomy extension specialists have provided information to producers and industry regarding soil fertility, conservation of soil and water resources, tillage and production systems, evaluation of crop varieties and hybrids, and protection of the environment, thus, keeping Kansas agriculture efficient and competitive;

Whereas the Department of Agronomy faculty have prepared students in agronomy to effectively serve agriculture and society by feeding the world and protecting soil and water resources;

Whereas the alumni of the Department of Agronomy have distinguished themselves in the public and private sectors as crop, soil, range, and weed science professionals and have become farmers, extension agents, educators, administrators, consultants, representatives, scientists, missionaries, military officers, contractors, and a host of other professionals; and

Whereas many alumni of the Department of Agronomy have become leaders in their communities, academia, industry, and government, contributing significantly to world agriculture by making hybrid corn a reality, developing seeds for the Green Revolution, developing sorghum into an important crop, breeding "Miracle Rice" for Asia, and leading national programs in wheat, barley, oat, and alfalfa: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate congratulates and commends the Department of Agronomy in the College of Agriculture at Kansas State University for 100 years of excellent service to Kansas agriculture, the citizens of Kansas, the United States, and the world.

LIGHTS ON AFTERSCHOOL

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the HELP Committee be discharged from further consideration, and the Senate now proceed to S. Con. Res. 116.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the concurrent resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 116) supporting "Lights On Afterschool," a national celebration of after school programs.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the concurrent resolution.

LIGHTS ON AFTERSCHOOL

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, Today, I ask my colleagues to recognize the 7th Annual Lights on Afterschool events taking place across the country on October 12, 2006. "Lights on Afterschool is a national celebration in which more than 1 million Americans will gather in their communities to recognize the important role that afterschool programs provide for the children in this country.

Afterschool providers throughout California and across the country have demonstrated that afterschool programs keep children safe, improve learning, and reduce crime and drug use. According to the FBI, youth are most at risk for being victims of violent crimes and committing violent acts between 3 p.m. and 6 p.m.—after school is out and before parents arrive home. Afterschool programs keep children safe, reduce crime and drug use, and improve academic performance.

As we take this occasion to recognize the afterschool program providers, we also must honor the communities that also contribute to the enrichment of these afterschool activities that provide safe and supervised afterschool educational, enrichment, and recreational programs. The partnerships you have forged with the afterschool program providers are instrumental in their success. There is no responsibility greater than ensuring that our children can learn and grow in a safe environment.

Afterschool programs are critical to the success of American families. These programs make it easier for parents to go to work because they know that their children are in a safe and nourishing environment. According to the Afterschool Alliance, 14.3 million children go home to an empty house every day. We must work to ensure these children have access to these programs that are vital to developing cultural and social skills, as well as the academic enrichment that the programs provide.

Afterschool is a wise investment in our children's future. That is why I will continue to work to make after school a national priority—so that we can bring Federal resources to support great local programs to keep the lights on and the doors open.

I send my sincere thanks to everyone working in programs and schools involved with Lights on Afterschool and for all of the work you have done and continue to do in creating partnerships that promote and enhance afterschool programs.

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the concurrent resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 116) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The concurrent resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows:

S. CON. RES. 116

Whereas high quality after school programs provide safe, challenging, engaging, and fun learning experiences to help children and youth develop their social, emotional, physical, cultural, and academic skills;

Whereas high quality after school programs support working families by ensuring that the children in such families are safe and productive after the regular school day ends;

Whereas high quality after school programs build stronger communities by involving the Nation's students, parents, business leaders, and adult volunteers in the lives of the Nation's youth, thereby promoting positive relationships among children, youth, families, and adults;

Whereas high quality after school programs engage families, schools, and diverse community partners in advancing the well-being of the Nation's children;

Whereas "Lights On Afterschool," a national celebration of after school programs held on October 12, 2006, promotes the critical importance of high quality after school programs in the lives of children, their families, and their communities;

Whereas more than 28,000,000 children in the United States have parents who work outside the home and 14,300,000 children in the United States have no place to go after school; and

Whereas many after school programs across the United States are struggling to keep their doors open and their lights on: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), That Congress supports the goals and ideals of "Lights On Afterschool," a national celebration of after school programs.

VETERANS' COMPENSATION COST-OF-LIVING ADJUSTMENT ACT OF 2006

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 539, S. 2562.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2562) to increase, effective as of December 1, 2006, the rates of compensation for veterans with service-connected disabilities and the rates of dependency and indemnity compensation for the survivors of certain disabled veterans.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

(At the request of Mr. REID, the following statement was ordered to be printed in the RECORD.)

Mr. AKAKA. Mr. President, as ranking member of the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs, I am extremely pleased with Senate passage of legislation that will authorize a cost-of-living adjustment for veterans' compensation.

The Veterans' Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act of 2006, S. 2562, directs the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to increase, as of December 1, 2006, the rates of veterans' disability compensation, dependency and indemnity compensation for surviving spouses and children, and certain related benefits.